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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that the possibility of a radical alternative is rarely examined in educational administration theory. In assuming the need for managed organizations, most researchers and practitioners perpetuate the status quo. However, the efforts of de Chardin, Jung, Schumacher, Capra, and Steiner indicate that a unified, holistic paradigm is imminent. The paradigm views education not as a service industry for the poorly managed money-economy, but as an innate process of human development in a postmanagerial society. From this perspective, most of what is lauded today as educational excellence and administrative efficiency is objectionable. The "guardians of orthodoxy," especially those within universities and other professional organizations, inhibit the analysis of the theoretical implications and practical consequences of the above assumption. (Contains 28 references.) (LMI)

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The Post-Managerial Hypothesis

Abstract

In equating anarchy with disorderly chaos, and so assuming the inevitable need for managed organizations, researchers, teachers and practitioners in the field of educational administration, as in most other domains of theory-based practice, perpetuate the cosmetically-changing status-quo, ie. "the current mess". Apart from the few inevitable exceptions, such as Illich and Greenfield, the possibility of a radical alternative is rarely postulated, let alone examined.

The emergence of a unified, holistic paradigm, through the efforts of liberal-educated generalists such as de Chardin, Jung, Schumacher, Capra and Steiner, may indicate, however, that a radical change is imminent.

It can be assumed, for example, that education is best thought of not as a service industry for the poorly managed money-economy but as the innate process whereby human beings are meant to develop to the stage of mental-physical-emotional-social maturity, whereat we are capable of living, enjoyably, in a post-managerial society. If so, most of what is lauded today as educational excellence and administrative efficiency is objectionable.

Yet the "guardians of orthodoxy", especially within universities and other professional associations, make it very difficult to analyze and to publicize the theoretical implications, and to enact, and so test, the practical consequences, of this unconventional assumption. This paper is an attempt to overcome that difficulty.

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The Post-Managerial Hypothesis

Introduction

The theory of educational administration that we each advocate, and put into practice, is determined by our unproven assumption(s) concerning the nature of education which derive, in turn, from our unproven assumption(s) concerning the nature of life-on-earth.

By thinking of education, along with politics, economics and management, as a social science, instead of as applied philosophy, or theosophy, most practitioners and their gurus are able to avoid critical examination of the lack of consistent principle in the unproven assumptions, ie guesses, on which their theory and practice is based. Buzzwords such as equity, excellence and efficiency, which can mean virtually anything, depending on the purpose that is being conceptualized, are commonly used to conceal this lack of theoretical principle and the associated hypocrisy of the reasoning used to justify the norms of normal activity, whether formalized or informal. As a consequence, although an illusion of progress is manufactured and marketed, the cosmetically-changing status-quo goes on and on, ad nauseum, without anything of radical importance being improved.

Our basic problem, from which all others derive, is conceptual, rather than technological, managerial, financial, agricultural, ecclesiastical, intellectual or political. Only by learning to comprehend and so solve this problem, imaginatively, in our heads, can we resolve its consequences, experientially, in the outside world. This ubiquitous problem is the poor quality of our thinking relevant to qualitative relationships, rather than any poverty of quantifiable things. This, for example, is why 45,000 little children are being allowed to die daily of preventable malnutrition, in a world of wealth.

The solution to the riddle of life is to be found in an holistic reconceptualization, as is being attempted, for example, by the deep ecologists (Lovelock, 1988). Our

problem(s) won't be solved by corporate managerialism, economic materialism, political legislation, band-aid charity or quantifiable research, any more than they have been solved by precept-bound spiritualism or religious fundamentalism, or will be solved for us by Superman or some other magic messiah. Yet Taylorism (Taylor, 1911), which should be dead and buried by now in some academic text-book, has lately been resurrected and updated to become flavour-of-the-month for many of our educational managers (and highly profitable, in money-terms, for many entrepreneurial consultants). Consequently, the extrinsic rewards for managerial work and entrepreneurial work continue to increase, relative to those for the work of managees such as school teachers.

Educators, with notable exceptions such as Illich (1977), and especially those favoured with research grants, prestigious publications and elevated status, have failed miserably to sell the notion that education is a unique process, more important than other activities such as management, commerce and politics, and too comprehensive to be understood from the relatively narrow perspectives of sciences such as Sociology, Psychology and Pedagogy. As a consequence, the high-priests of scientific management now rule, along with most others, the educational roost.

Belief

To correctly understand, in order to sustainably solve this problem, is a matter of conceptualization, or theory-building. We all use theories, which are complex conceptualizations, to understand, justify and/or predict events, including the event of events that we each know as our own life (Ogilvie, 1984).

A theory is an assumption that consists of constituent assumptions. An assumption is an idea that can be conceptualized but can't be proven to be either true or false, and so

is merely plausible, but is thought by the believer(s) to provide the best available reason to explain why some, or all, events are happening as they are. Assumptions which are used to legitimate belief in other assumptions may be called norms (or rules or theoretical principles) and are believed, as distinct from being merely thought about, because they are assumed to be inherently logical and/or authoritatively decreed.

Norms, such as those that govern normal European logic, give a bounded structure to belief systems and, when believed by a group of the faithful, define a corporate whole (eg a culture, a class, a tribe or a commercial company) to which they all believe they belong. In most cases, believers think that they are justified in over-ruling and otherwise disadvantaging non-believers, but will object if the managees claim equal, reciprocal rights. They act, in other words, as self-opinionated hypocrites.

Hypocrites talk with forked tongues, don't practice what they preach, have double standards, can't see that sauce for the goose is also sauce for the gander, and/or object to taking the same type of medicine that they dish out to others. Very often, by means of bodily sign-language, they will say, "Do as I say; don't do as I actually do." They are self-deluding, as distinct from deliberately dishonest, although deliberate dishonesty may be included in their repertoire of interpersonal skills.

Their reified corporations, and the anxieties, rememberings, arguments, regrets and plannings that are normally associated with them, mean that, at any moment, their intellectual reasoning, emotional feeling and corporeal sensing are out of joint; fragmented rather than integrated. As managers they control both the policy-making process, whereby an arbitrary set of norms is identified and adopted, either formally or informally, for their corporation, and the policy-implementation process whereby those norms are enforced, as thought necessary, by some judgmental system of praise and blame

(Ogilvie, 1980). They are inevitably hypocrites, which is one reason why the question of hypocrisy is so seldom addressed in the corporations they control.

Catharsis

Holistic thinkers, as the idea is defined in this research report, are significantly different, in that their more particular assumptions are all implied by one ubiquitous proposition; the All is alive (Dobzhansky, 1971:29).

The aim of holistic educators is a single-focused, playful attitude towards the sensed here-and-now, but this metanoic change can only derive from imagining, or conceptualizing, the abstract reason for making it, not from mere practical instruction from somebody else, although others may certainly provide a useful stimulus for the intuitive insight. Like other quantum leaps in the evolution of life-on-earth, this one, from human immaturity to human maturity, requires an optimum size if it is to be sustainable, which is why it has not yet occurred for the human species. Nevertheless, the numerical size of the exponentially increasing population today and the integrating universality of the emerging holistic paradigm are signs indicating the imminence of the global catharsis predicted by many utopian theorists.

To think, as many do, that the wolf will not arrive, because there have been a number of false alarms, is a non-sequitur of mammoth proportions, while to think that a catastrophe must be bad news for everybody involved is to ignore the derivation of the word.

Practicality

Poorly-educated people, including most university graduates, commonly criticize utopian theories such as the one proposed in this paper (and the proposers!) because they are "impractical", "unscientific", "unprofessional" and/or "unscholarly". Postman (1979) typifies the type. For those critics, the practicality of a theory means its profitable use, for legitimating activity, in terms of one of the particular social systems to which they have been taught to believe that they belong, such as the Mitsubishi Corporation, the Nursing Profession, the Sicilian Mafia, Uncle Sam or Educational Administration, which they normally capitalize to demonstrate how extremely important they are. Those legalized fictions are usually represented to lesser mortals by great men, strong leaders, authoritative experts or powerful personalities, playing superordinate roles such as Professor, President, Principal or Patrician, and using symbols such as flag, logo or fasces.

All of those fasces-bearers make use of the fact that human beings are naturally gregarious. We all have a deep-gutted need to belong, along with others, to a more-inclusive, more-important, whole or larger-living-unit, from which or whom we derive our sense of meaningful purpose and a related sense of self-identity and self-importance. Our self-identity equates with the role(s) we think we are enacting in serving a number of contextual wholes, and normally we will defend this self-identity, including the related institution(s) and symbol(s), rabidly. Historically, the wholes we have manufactured for this reason have been norm-governed, man-managed organizations such as the family-clan, the theological-sect, the scholarly-discipline, the tennis-club and the world-economy, all of which have been non-living as wholes, albeit believed in, as structured institutions, by living organisms (Berger & Luckman, 1979; Gronn, 1983). As constructs, they resemble, somewhat, the nests built by tropical termites except that they exist as

wholes only as mental images in the heads of those who inhabit them, a bit like the new clothes that the naked emperor thought he was wearing. In plebeian terms, they resemble pink elephants in that there ain't no such animals, even though the relevant drunkard will swear black and blue that they are real....as they are temporarily, for him.

Their artificial systems give those persons a sense of meaning and associated purpose which they are unable to get from the natural system from which they feel fearfully alienated. Yet it can be argued that the most practical theory of all is the one that busts those man-made systems to smithereens and frees us from their limitations by opening up a better relationship with the natural system, which is then known to be an organic whole; superhuman and convivial rather than mindlessly subhuman.

This means consciously belonging to a living, willing organism, of which the evolving earth is a multi-functional organ, rather than to reified regimes; role-playing to serve a contextual happening to whom all other events, including self-conscious creatures, are meaningfully related (Needleman, 1988).

Such a theory is unified, by means of a single, albeit complex, assumption, in contrast to the partial theories of the academic pluralists, and is heuristic rather than hegemonic in that it is learnt from extensive experience, and believed because of its intrinsic reasonableness, rather than taught by superordinate specialists using some version of the carrot-stick process that is commonly called politics, management or government, of which a sub-set is pedagogy, as practised by most school-teachers (Ogilvie, 1979). Moreover, the outcome of its use is consensual diversity in contrast to the detailed standardization favoured by politically-minded persons. In educational terms, the socialization of "educare" is meant to be eventually superceded by "educere" for personal liberation or individuation which, paradoxically in the dualistic terms of traditional

Western philosophy and science, means mutual interdependence of the tip-top degree. Persons who use freedom for any purpose except mutual-aiding are abusing the privilege.

Imperfect humankind's great need is for an ideology that links older heavenly life with newer earthly life, in "a grand narrative of emancipation", releasing us to a higher level of self-consciousness and associated interaction. The main function of normal, practical theories, relevant for example to the politicized regimes of church, state, profession and industry, is to divert our attention from our failure to satisfy this primordial need. Like an opiate, this mental myopia allows us to rationalize, and so legitimate and tolerate, the animal-like existences (characterized by pecking-orders, territoriality and habituality) that most of us consequently endure, most of the time (Freud, 1930). The alternative, historically, would have been uncontrollable angst, lemming-like suicide and a dead ending for the species.

Our modern obsession for increasing the quantity of our produced possessions and/or consumptions, especially "information", instead of improving the affectionate quality of our interpersonal relationships, merely illustrates the last in a long line of social realities that have been constructed by practical men who, beginning with the pyramids of the ancient world, have been "good" at managing subordinates and/or at constructing things, but not much good at learning to love. Their main innovation this century, apart from inventing mechanical computers, has been to admit more similar-type women than before, to the club. Throughout history, the academic profession, both religious and secular, has been used to legitimate the arbitrary norms whereby members of one or another version of that managerial class have been able to enjoy the neurotic pleasures and privileges of dominance. Such enjoyment may be natural for big, male, baboons, but is neurotic for adult humans of either sex.

Research

Professional researchers who study people, including their ideologies, almost invariably study people living institutionalized roles (eg. as teenagers, koories, headmasters or air hostesses) rather than locate institutionalized life within a more meaningful context. The boundaries whereby those specialists conceptualize their research questions limit the possibilities they explore and the answers they find. They see, and experience, and report upon the types of event they are looking for. Admittedly, most of those whom they study, in their case studies, share a similarly conservative view of "the real world", but remarkably few professional researchers ask if this is necessarily so. Their research is a bit like seeking the best technique for flogging a dead horse without first asking if the whipping is really necessary (Ogilvie, 1985).

This is understandable in that those who control the funding for the professional research regime share a similarly limited view of reality, and of associated practicality. Moreover they have succeeded in terms of that reality and so are unlikely to see any real reason to question its validity. In fact, like the dominants of all other reified abstractions, they have a vested interest in promoting the idea that their regime is not only working well, but better than ever, and in ignoring, or otherwise deprecating (eg. as a case of "sour grapes") any critical questioning of their basic assumptions. To suggest that the emperor needs a new hat may be tolerable, but to say that he is, in fact, naked from the knees up, is not.

Nevertheless, there is an alternative, logico-deductive and naturalistic, approach to enquiry as illustrated by vocational researchers who have been as otherwise diverse as Rousseau, Thoreau and the Chinese Taoists. This experimental-experiential type of enquiry is cheap, and can be conducted independent of the tribal elders of formalized

research. Such informal research may be denigrated by saying that only monkeys work for peanuts, but it is equally true that only domesticated apes are motivated by money.

The key concept today is "holism", as has been partly clarified by holistic-type researchers such as de Chardin (1977), Schumacher (1977), Koestler (1979), Capra (1983), Jung (Moacanin, 1986), and Steiner (Seddon, 1988). Unfortunately, each one's particular insights have been adopted by a cultic following of disciples, as happened earlier, for example, with the related insights of Krishna, Lao Tzu, Gautama, Jesus and Marx. To be successful, holistic research needs to be eclectic, syncretic and common-sensical, which is why it is so unlikely to be promoted by the controllers of personality cults or professional associations, who have a vested interest, in their terms, in compartmentalizing knowledge into specialized domains of discourse and practice, for which the tower-of-babel is the perfect metaphor.

As a consequence, they and their dependents fail to see the universal forest, in which they are lost, for their parochial trees.

Because all events are interconnected, they constitute one whole, and because parts derive their true meaning from the whole to which/whom they belong, the most valuable research today is holistic and deductive, starting with an assumption concerning the one natural whole, rather than with some mundane question relative to any of the abstract regimes we have reified as reality. To ask such minor questions merely endorses the false consciousness associated with those legalized fictions, which is the hegemonic role performed, albeit unintentionally, by professional researchers in particular and professional academics in general. Especially important are the types of relationship envisaged between the whole and various types of part, including the actual researcher(s), which means, among other things, that eclectic organization theory, or general systems theory, is

an appropriate tool for the trade (Ogilvie, 1987), while education, or personal evolution, is an appropriate process to focus upon, because it and its ending constitute the logical purpose of all sub-types of worthwhile knowledge.

We are each free and, somewhat paradoxically compelled, to visualize whatever content-context relationship makes most sense to us, and to experiment with our own life to test the validity of, so as to change as seems sensible, our hypothesis. When our psychological events, or thoughts, complement completely our biological events, then we attain atonement with the living universe and our living, as distinct from our education, or our learning to live, can commence.

Subversion

Because wholes and parts are even more different than chalk and cheese, we can't know our whole *per se*, irrespective of the height of the scientific technology we may be using. However, we can learn how to relate with her, for her, in terms of part-part relationships. We can learn to understand any part-whole interaction as a metaphor (or simile, analogy or parable) of some part-part relationship we already know, or know about. Holistic understanding is thus a matter of artistic metaphor rather than secular science or ecclesiastical decree.

Metaphors illustrate a commonality of types of event, role and character from virtually all schools of thought. They reveal, to the seeker of wisdom, a ubiquitous integrity, or cohesive story, that escapes the disciplined expert, who, in terms of wisdom, is too clever by half for his/her own good.

A metaphor illustrates an idea of a type of event, using a common-sense vernacular. Newspaper cartoonists often use metaphors very effectively.

A good metaphor allows a layperson to get the gist of an abstract concept that transcends disciplined-based boundaries, even though disciplinarians may deny, or disguise, the universality of the type of event being described, and the easiness whereby it can be classified and so understood, by almost anybody.

Figurative language is a very powerful tool but, like all other tools, from science to technology, can be used for either good or evil. It is good for promoting equality, which is why the most colourful metaphors have generally been banned as "bad language" by the established dominants of all meritocracies, including church and university. To say, for example, that meritocrats have their heads up their own anal orifices, admiring the view, may be figuratively true, but is highly subversive and normally unpublishable.

On the other hand, a bad metaphor misrepresents an event by stereotyping it with others that it patently contradicts. Established dominants commonly use bad metaphors, as part of their political use of language.

For the seeker of wisdom, it is a case of finding the best metaphor for the best type of interaction. The interactions of patriarchal families or of mechanical clocks or of jungle species may satisfy some people, but the best interaction is, arguably, the intimate knowing of coitus (Rawson, 1973). For this reason, academics (who, as academics, are, in the playground parlance of working-class boys, "all brain and no sensuality") are generally unqualified for knowing of this magnitude. Moreover, the language used in their academic domains is normally not only intellectually pretentious and sexually inhibited but also humourless, so that their works tend to be deadly dull for anybody who is not an intellectual masochist.

It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of humour (Jansen, 1992) in the getting of wisdom.

Healthy humour is the experience of pleasure that is known when normal elitism is ridiculed, as when pride is followed by a fall, "superiors" are insulted, judges are exposed as drunkards, or emperors are seen to be silly. The human sense of humour derives from the fact, generally known unconsciously, that divine love-play is the superb experience but is impossible for anybody with an egalitarian mind-set, even though such persons rule and regulate the civilized world, and feel virtuous in their bossiness.

This explains why our superordinates, whether elected by majorities or appointed by minorities, or installed by physical violence, normally ban humour, especially humorous metaphors, from their scholarly publications, houses of worship and court rooms, and circumscribe it with all sorts of taboos in less important locations. Unlike their neurotic humour, which sustains a faction-ridden status quo, good uninhibited humour subverts any system of dominance and associated privilege more effectively than anything else, with the possible exception of good, uninhibited, sexuality.

To see, with a highly developed sense of humour, that, in taking their superordinate roles so seriously, social dominants are really quite silly, stimulates an enjoyable mental relief and deep-gutted laughter. This type of orgiastic experience, like all other types, is especially enjoyable, and decreasingly dangerous, if shared with like-minded fellows.

The Definition

It is not overly difficult to associate with others who share the same particular interest, such as Tibetan Buddhism, permaculture, fornication, money-making or water-skiing. Nor is it difficult to sit at the feet of alleged masters in order to learn what they know, nor even to make up, master and teach the rules for a new regime oneself.

The unique aspect of loving, which has made the process so difficult to perfect, is that the common end-purpose is the sustainable perfection of the quality of the interaction, in terms of helpfulness, harmlessness, equality, affection and happiness, but especially wholeness. The only pre-requisite is a belief in the possibility, and the supreme importance, of learning to participate in this relationship wherein each is helped by the others to live the particular life-story he/she wants to authorize.

We can learn the egalitarian-love code from the reported words of insightful persons such as Hillel the pharisee and Jesus the heretic, but we learn to actually put that code into practice with each other individual beloved-lover. This means that there are no experts involved, except that each is accepted as the expert concerning their own particular pleasures and the means, psychological and/or biological, whereby these are generated. This means, in turn, that peculiar rules may apply, temporarily, to the realization of each participant's wants, without breaking the one overarching rule. No particular assortment of institutionalized knowledge is essential for loving, except that access to such knowledge allows us to know how non-lovers think which enables them to be outfoxed when they would otherwise be harmful, as demonstrated by the escapades of lovable characters such as Brer Rabbit and the third little pig.

Among lovers-beloveds, the power most valued is the two-part ability to pleasure, as entertainer, and be pleased by, as client, other members of the love-club, which means that the power cannot be unequally possessed, but by being necessarily shared, is equally accessible for all. Any failure reflects equally on everybody. There is no sense of unequal merit as, for example, in the professional entertainment industry. Both aspects of the role are equally important, as reactive authorizer and as proactive servant, and role-reversal is an essential part of the play.

Priviso

However, the love-code only makes practical sense if we belong to a living universe that has authorized the evolving solar system, and whose mature sense-of-self, in our location, is destined to be provided by consensual humankind. Throughout her immature foreplay, this solar organism is best regarded as a structured, experiential-learning game, full of signs, from which we each extract the learnings that are appropriate to our own nature, so that open-mindedness is an essential pre-requisite for the personal development that leads to truthful understanding. Although life-on-earth has been created by her, it can only be lived, lovingly, by creatures who learn to decipher, and enact, the code that reveals her divine nature, as a service to her.

In this way, rational reason and intuitive faith, theory and practice, science and spirituality, scholarship and eclecticism, become mutually supportive, which leads to the holistic understanding whereby the spiritually meek can inherit the living corporeal earth, symbolised by "the tree" and "the vine", as distinct from the civilized, corporate world, symbolized by "the temple" and "the pyramid".

Conclusion

None of the foregoing is meant to denigrate past practices which doubtless were appropriate for their time and their practitioners, but is intended to propose a vision of the future, for the present. What are the practical implications of this mission statement for the education industry in general, and for educational administration in particular?

To ask the question of the guru, instead of working out the answer, personally and/or collectively, is to have missed the point of the proposition.

Which means, for each of us, whatever we each decide it means, in terms of the type of whole(s) to which/whom we each assume we belong.

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